



Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

Tom Liebel, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

February 12, 2019

REQUEST: Demolition Hearing One – Determination of Architectural Significance

ADDRESS: 39-41 Stockton Street (Union Square Historic District)

RECOMMENDATION: Determination that 39-41 Stockton Street is not a contributing building in the local historic district

STAFF: Walter W. Gallas, AICP

APPLICANT: Thomas Hams

OWNERS: BWI RE Properties, LLC

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT

Union Square Historic District: The Union Square local historic district is a dense area of rowhouses and commercial structures located in Southwest Baltimore. Two major features define the district: Union Square Park, a donation to the city in the 1840s, and Hollins Market with the city's oldest market building. Generally bounded by S. Schroeder Street, W. Pratt Street, S. Fulton Avenue, and W. Baltimore Street, the area of approximately 21 blocks is comprised of over 1,000 buildings. The district is built on a hierarchical street-grid system laid out over gently sloping terrain by engineer-surveyor Thomas H. Poppleton following the land's 1816 annexation to the city.

Site Conditions/Architectural Description: 39-41 Stockton Street is located in the eastern part of the historic district between S. Carrollton Avenue to the east, Hollins Street to the north, S. Carey Street to the west, and W. Lombard Street to the south. The Hollins Market is nearby (*Images 1- 3*).

This is a one-story flat-roofed painted masonry garage structure with four bays. A door has been inserted into one of the smaller bays; the other bays are enclosed. The structure abuts three two-story rowhouses to the south (*Images 4 & 5*). The building's lot is enclosed on the north and east sides by an improvised fence made of two-by-fours and sheets of plywood. The resultant enclosure attracts dumping (*Images 6-8*).

BACKGROUND

CHAP files show no activity related to this property.

PROPOSAL & APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

The applicant proposes to demolish the building and secure the lot.

Staff applied Section 3.6 Demolition Procedures of the *Baltimore City Historic Preservation Rules and Regulations*, specifically “Demolition Hearing One—Determination of Architectural Significance.”

3.6 DEMOLITION HEARING ONE-DETERMINATION OF ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The first step in the demolition review process is a public hearing to determine if the building contributes to a local historic district or continues to meet standards for designation as a local landmark. At this hearing staff shall present the following:

1. The historical and/or architectural significance of the property;
2. The history of all structures on the property including the approximate dates of additions and significant alterations;
3. A determination of the historical and/or architectural significance of a structure’s additions, significant alterations, or ancillary buildings; and
4. Application of criteria for designation (see 2.1) to the structure in question.

A determination regarding the significance of the structure will be made prior to considering details of the demolition and hardship application, and any projects for new construction on the site. Doing so allows the Commission to determine the importance of the structure solely upon architectural and historical criteria. If a structure does not meet the criteria or contribute to the historic character of a local district, then an Authorization to Proceed for demolition shall be issued.

History/Architectural Significance—History of Structure

The 1890 Sanborn map shows 39-41 S. Stockton Street as a two-story masonry stable with a one-story wood ell at the rear. Neighboring it to the south are five two-story rowhouses (*Image 9*). The property and its neighbors appear essentially unchanged in the 1901-1902 Sanborn map (*Image 10*). By the mid-20th century the main building is still two stories but it had gained some more additions at the rear, and it is being used for automobiles. The two southern-most rowhouses next door have been demolished and replaced by stalls or garages (*Image 11*). At some time in the early 20th century, the building was either entirely demolished and rebuilt as one story, or the second story of the original was removed. A photo from Phoebe Stanton’s 1975 *Poppleton Historic Study* shows 39-41 S. Stockton Street in its present one-story condition (*Image 12*).

2.2 CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING DISTRICTS AND LANDMARKS

...[T]he Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation will apply the following criteria in relation to the procedures for historic district and landmark designation....

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The quality of significance in Baltimore history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, public interiors,

structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

1. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Baltimore history; or
2. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in Baltimore's past; or
3. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
4. That have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in Baltimore prehistory or history.

Present Conditions and Application of Criteria for Designation

39-41 S. Stockton is a simple one-story garage structure. While the original structure on the site was a two-story stable, there is no evidence of what this building looked like. What remains today is a very basic masonry building with no distinguishing architectural characteristics. The 1975 *Poppleton Historic Study* simply noted this building among the large number of garages on the interior alley streets of the block and didn't find it remarkable. The building does not meet any of the four criteria which distinguish a building in the historic district, and thus is not a contributing building.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Union Square Association has been notified of the proposal and has no objection to the proposed demolition.

ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATION

CHAP staff finds that 39-41 S. Stockton Street does not meet any of the criteria of significance, and thus is not a contributing building in the local historic district.



Eric Holcomb
Director

MAP AND IMAGES



Image 1: 39-41 Stockton Street in the Union Square Historic District



Image 2: Aerial view of 39-41 S. Stockton Street from west, December 22, 2017



Image 3: Aerial view of 39-41 S. Stockton Street from south, December 22, 2017



Image 4: 39-41 S. Stockton Street looking to south, January 22, 2019



Image 5: 39-41 S. Stockton Street looking north, January 22, 2019



Image 6: 39-41 S. Stockton Street, north edge of property, January 22, 2019



Image 7: 39-41 S. Stockton Street, east edge of property, January 22, 2019



Image 8: 39-41 S. Stockton Street, interior of property, January 22, 2019

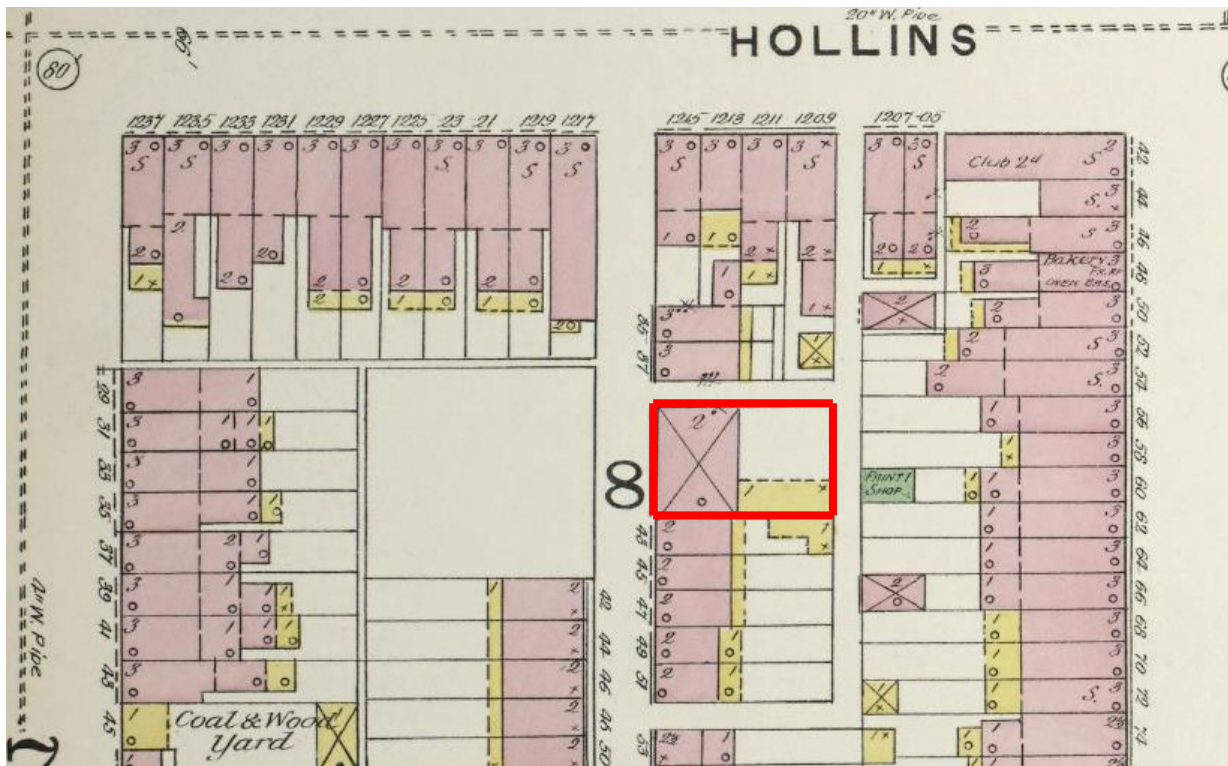


Image 9: 1890 Sanborn Map, 39-41 S. Stockton Street

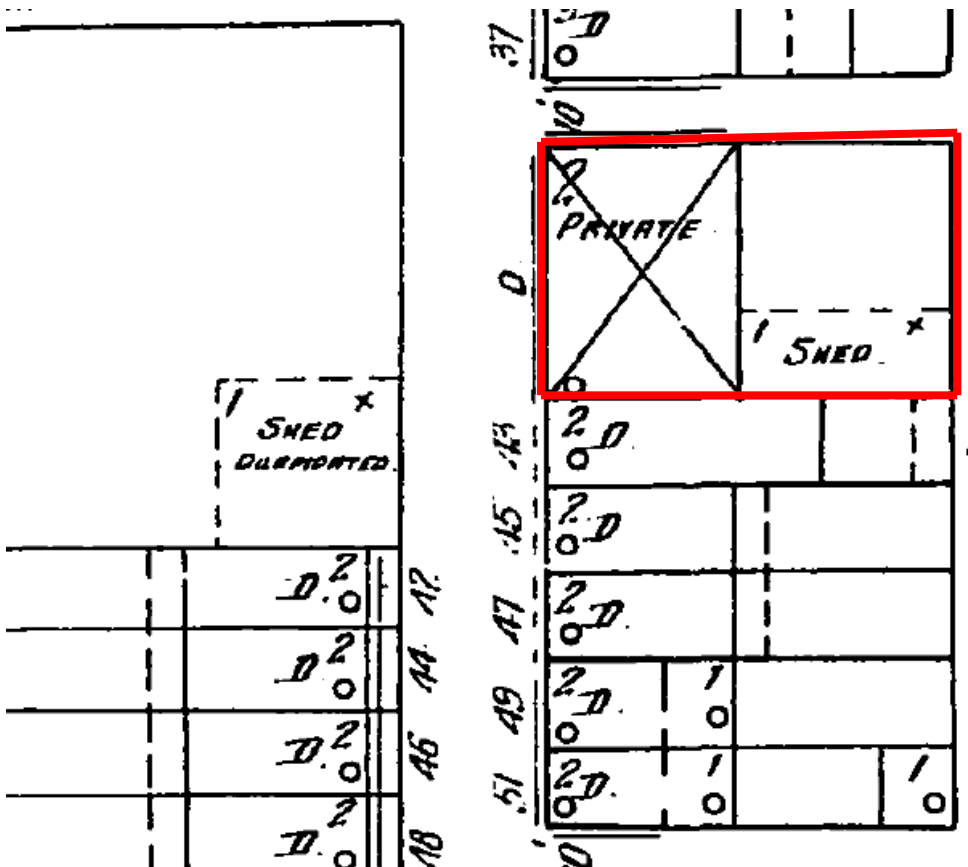


Image 10: Sanborn Map 1901-1902, 39-41 S. Stockton Street

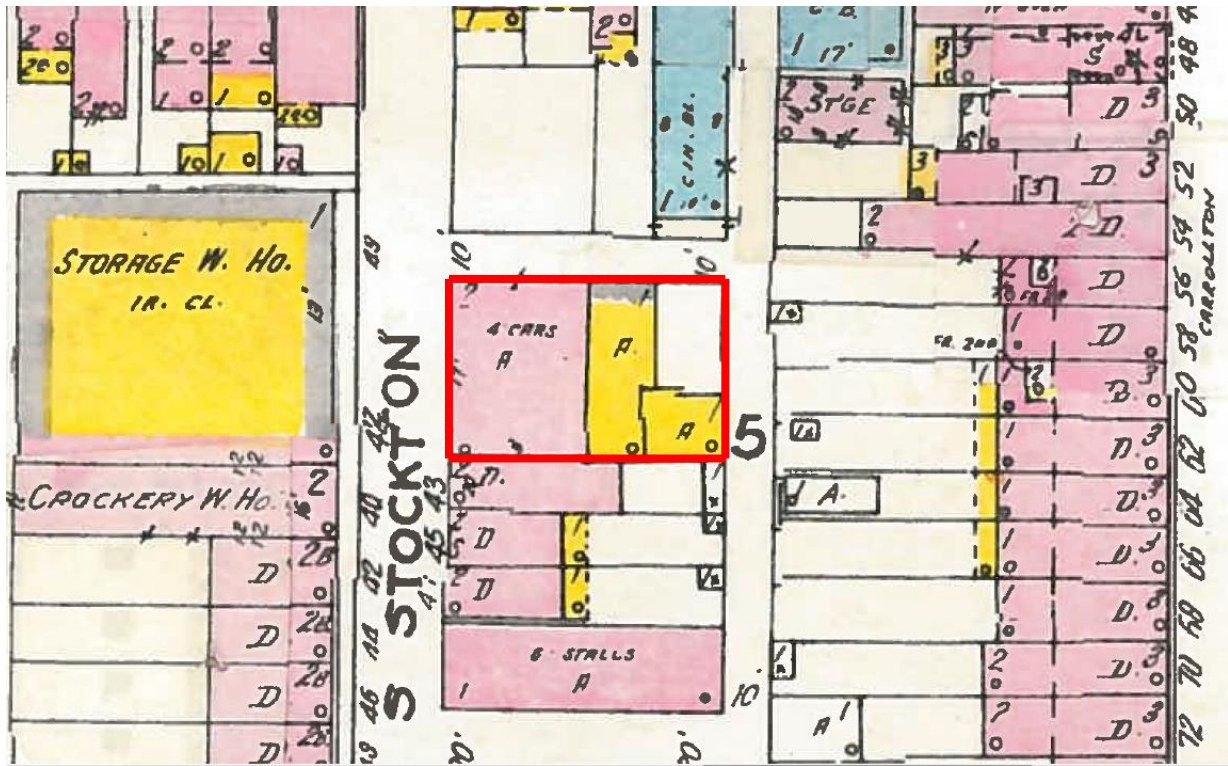


Image 11: Sanborn Map 1952



Image 12: 39-41 S. Stockton Street, Poppleton Historic Study, July 1975